

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652/ N/A

TAGS: SCUL, VE

SUBJ: GOV GIFT OF SCULPTURE TO THE UNITED STATES

1. VICE MINISTER GOMEZ MANTELLINI CALLED ME TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY MARCH 15 TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED GIFT OF THE ALEJANDRO OTERO SCULPTURE. HE SAID HE WAS SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT PEREZ WHO IS CONCERNED THAT "TIME IS FLYING" WITH LITTLE APPARENT PROGRESS TOWARD ARRANGING THIS MATTER. I EXPLAINED TO GOMEZ MANTELLINI MY UNDERSTANDING OF WHERE WE STOOD AND SAID I HOPED TO HAVE A PROGNOSIS ON CONGRESSIONAL ACTION BEFORE THE END OF THE WEEK. I ASSURED THE VICE MINISTER THAT WE WERE DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO EXPEDITE THE DONATION OF THE SCULPTURE.

2. GOMEZ MANTELLINI HANDED ME AN AIDE MEMOIRE, THE TEXT OF WHICH FOLLOWS IN INFORMAL TRANSLATION:
QUOTE: THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA, ON OCCASION OF THE COMMEMORATION

OF THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES, RATIFIES ITS DESIRE TO PRESENT TO THE CITY OF WASHINGTON A SCULPTURE BY THE DISTINGUISHED VENEZUELAN ARTIST ALEJANDRO OTERO AND CONSIDERS IT OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO BRING THAT FACT TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES FOR PERTINENT PURPOSES.

AMONG OTHER EFFORTS, THE EMBASSY OF VENEZUELA IN THE UNITED STATES HAS EMPHASIZED THE HOPE THAT THE POSSIBILITY WILL BE CONSIDERED OF
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PLACING THE SCULPTURE IN CONSTITUTION GARDEN.

ALSO, THE SERIOUSNESS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT, ALONG WITH THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FAME OF THE ARTIST, ALEJANDRO OTERO, HAVE BEEN EMPHASIZED BY THE VENEZUELAN DIPLOMATIC MISSION.

IN THE FOLDER ANNEXED TO THIS AIDE MEMOIRE WILL BE FOUND PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SCULPTURE IN QUESTION AND ITS PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS.

GIVEN THE GREAT SIGNIFICANCE WHICH VENEZUELA ATTRIBUTES TO THE COMMEMORATION OF THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES, THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA DESIRES TO BECOME ACQUAINTED, AS IT MAY BE POSSIBLE, WITH THE OFFICIAL PROGRAM WHICH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS IN THIS RESPECT. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT: I CAN ONLY EMPHASIZE AGAIN THE GREAT IMPORTANCE PRESIDENT PEREZ ATTACHES TO THIS GIFT AND THE UNFORTUNATE CONSEQUENCES THAT WOULD RESULT IF WE WERE UNABLE TO ACCEPT IT IN A TIMELY FASHION.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: I WOULD APPRECIATE ASAP A STATUS REPORT ON THE SCULPTURE QUESTION FOR PASSING ON TO THE GOV. I WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON HOW TO RESPOND TO THE REQUEST FOR THE "OFFICIAL PROGRAM" OF THE BICENTENNIAL.
SHLAUDEMAM

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